



BRIDPORT TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016



This is the Town Council's annual report for 2015/16. As Town Mayor for that year, I am pleased to present the report, which includes details of the Town Council's work over the year.

Councillor Sandra Brown, Town Mayor and Chairman 2015/16



Civic Day September 2015 at the Hat Festival

This report provides a summary of the projects delivered by the Town Council over the past year, followed by more detailed information on its operational services.

It also includes information on how the Town Council works, councillor details and the Annual Accounts for 2015/16.

More information on the Town Council's projects and services can be found on its web site www.bridport-tc.gov.uk or by contacting the Town Clerk, Bob Gillis on 01308 456722, r.gillis@bridport-tc.gov.uk.

Town Council Projects 2015-16

During the year, the Town Council:

Adopted a new Town Plan outlining future projects.

Worked with the Bridport Young Persons' Action Trust on the new fully accessible extension to West Bay Play Area, which opened this year.

Supported town events, including the administration of Road Closures.

Continued to work with surrounding parishes on the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan, known as "Vision 2030".

Helped to establish a new independent Charitable Trust to safeguard the Bridport Youth Centre.

Under a new Agency Agreement, took responsibility for Highway Verge cutting, on behalf of Dorset County Council.

Established a Coastal Community Team, which produced an Economic Plan and helped submit funding bids under the Coastal Community Fund.

Supported ongoing work to look at the options for community bus services in the Bridport area.

Worked on the redevelopment of the community web site, BridportandWestBay.co.uk.

Continued to support the Bridport Local Area Partnership following reduction in funding from the District Council.

Agreed one off capital grants to support key ongoing building projects in the town for the Museum, the Literary and Scientific Institute and the Arts Centre.

As part of the District Council's service review process, submitted a proposal for the Town Council to manage the Tourist Information Centre, which was subsequently approved.

Obtained planning permission to create additional car parking spaces at Plottingham, to replace those lost at the Magistrates' Court.

More information on the next two pages.

Town Council Services 2015-16

Allotments: The Town Council continues to provide a number of allotment sites in the area and to look for new sites. As at May 2016, it has 170 allotments with 41 people in the parish on the waiting list.

Asker Meadows: The open space and adjoining New Zealand site are now managed by a well supported community group, in partnership with the Town Council.

Borough Gardens: The Town Council continues to work with the Borough Gardens community group on improvements to the Gardens.

Bridport Football Club: The Town Council now has the freehold ownership of this land and the Football Club has an existing lease. The District Council manages the car park on behalf of the Town Council, with the proceeds split equally between the Football Club and Town Council. The Multi Use Games Arena on the site is free to use during the day and continues to be very popular.

Bridport Local Area Partnership: The Town Council continues to support BLAP, through the Town Council's new Project Manager post. BLAP continues to successfully represent a membership of 10 local councils and more than 100 local community groups, organisations and individuals.

CCTV: The Town Council provides support for the CCTV, which operates in the town centre.

Cemetery: The Town Council manages Bridport Cemetery. During the year we replaced the roof on the workshop and installed solar panels.

Coastal Community Team: The Town Council was successful in its application for a £10,000 grant to establish a Coastal Community Team (CCT), which is a local partnership formed to produce an Economic Plan for the area. The CCT includes representatives from the Bridport Local Area Partnership, Bridport Area Development Trust, Bridport & District Tourism Association, Bridport Chamber of Trade and Commerce, West Bay Community Forum and West Dorset District Council. The Team helped to submit bids for funding under the Coastal Community Fund in June.

Community Transport: The Town Council is supporting ongoing work to look at the options for community bus services in the Bridport area. Meetings have been held with representatives from WATAG, the County Council, Dorset POPP, BLAP, the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group and also representatives from the bus companies.

Consultation: The Town Council has responded to a large number of consultation exercises from national and local government over the past year, ensuring that the views of the town are taken into consideration on a variety of matters.

Democracy - Working with Young People: The Town Council has hosted meetings this year of the Bridport Area Youth Council, involving students from The Sir John Colfox School and local primary schools.

Events: The Town Council was represented at the Charter Fair, Food Festival, Melplash Show and the February Community Fair, as well as providing support for the Christmas Cheer Festival, the Hat Festival and processing road closures for key community events. It also organises the Remembrance Parade in November, which is such an important event for the town. The Town Council provided flags and bunting for the town centre last summer, put up lights at Christmas and enabled event organisers to have banners on town centre lamp posts.

Environment and Social Wellbeing Committee: Further photovoltaic panels were installed on Town Council buildings at the Cemetery and Mountfield. The Council's existing photovoltaic panels continue to generate income from the feed in tariff. A new solar thermal hot water system was installed in Mountfield.

Finances: The Town Council agreed its budget for 2016/17, taking account of the reduced funding for community planning, the continued reductions in the grant received by the Town Council under the localisation of council tax and the need to ensure that the Council was able to respond to pressures on District and County Council budgets and the need to protect local services.

Grants: The Town Council agreed to continue funding the Leisure Centre, Citizens' Advice Bureau, Museum and Arts Centre at existing levels, under longer term service level agreements. It also provides one off funding for community groups to support the delivery of projects. In total, the Town Council awarded £24,620.

Highways and Transportation: The Town Council considered a large number of issues over the year and forwarded a number of traffic management requests to the County Council, which, as the highway authority, has to agree all schemes.

Highway Verge Maintenance: The Town Council took on this service in March 2015.

Town Council Services 2015-16

Lengthsman: The Bridport Area Lengthsman is funded by the Town Council and the parish councils participating in the scheme - Bothenhampton & Walditch, Symondsbury and Bradpole.

Market: The Town Council manages the market and in 2015/16 there was an average of 29 stalls on Wednesdays and 65 on Saturdays.

Market & Business Liaison Sub Committee: The Sub Committee includes representatives from the Bridport & District Tourism Association, Chamber of Trade and Commerce, Market Traders' Forum and Bridport Local Area Partnership. The Sub Committee continued to receive reports on the market, town events and to co-ordinate town publicity and promotion. From 2016/17, this body will meet as a working group.

Millennium Green: The Town Council and Millennium Green Trust reviewed the current management agreement for the gardens and Coneygar Hill and the Trust is working on a new management plan.

Neighbourhood Justice Panels: The Town Council continued to work with Bridport Police, Dorchester and Sherborne Town Councils, Housing Associations and West Dorset District Council, on the roll out of Neighbourhood Justice Panels across West Dorset.

Neighbourhood Plan: The Town Council is working with Allington, Bothenhampton & Walditch, Bradpole and Symondsbury parish councils on Vision 2030, the Bridport Area Neighbourhood Plan. The delivery of the Plan is being co-ordinated by a community led Steering Group, overseen by a Joint Committee of all the participating councils.

Priory Lane/Community Orchard: Bridport Community Orchard Group manages the Orchard site and hosts a number of popular events during the year, including Apple Day and Wassailing events. The Orchard Group also manages the land at the top of Park Road. The sites are managed in partnership with the Town Council.

Planning: The Town Council is a consultee for planning applications. Over the past year, 196 applications were reported to its Plans Committee and comments passed to West Dorset District Council.

Play Areas: The Town Council maintains a number of play areas, including the very popular West Bay Play Area and has just completed the extension to that Play Area, which is fully accessible.

Riverside Gardens: The Town Council continues to maintain this popular open space.

Salt House: This venue continues to be well used and the Town Council now has the freehold ownership of the building and adjoining Green, following its transfer from the District Council. During the summer, the popular West Bay Wednesday evening markets were held once again on the Green and in the Salt House.

Staff: The Town Council is a Living Wage employer (Living Wage Foundation).

Town Hall: The Town Hall is open to the public six days a week.

Town Plan: The Town Plan provides a framework for the development of the Town Council's future policies, schemes and the formulation of budgets. The priority projects are reviewed each year and the Council receives regular progress reports on project delivery. The new updated Town Plan was formally adopted by the Council in April 2016.

Youth Centre: The Town Council has been supporting work to safeguard the future of the Youth Centre and Youth Club, in light of the decision taken by the County Council to withdraw from supporting Youth Centres. A new charitable Trust has been established to manage the building and the Town Council agreed a total of £15,000 to support the Centre, £5,000 of which will go towards Youth Club services.

West Bay: the new Water Sports Centre, owned by the Town Council, was formally opened in May 2015 to house the Canoe Club and Gig Club. The Town Council continues to support the West Bay Forum and take forward projects, through the Coastal Community Team.

The Civic Year

I have had a wonderful year representing the town at many events, in Bridport and in other towns. There have been some really special occasions. The High Sheriff Jennifer Coombs came to Bridport for our blue light service and returned for the Apple Wassailing day. I attended all the annual community events, including the Melplash Show, Carnival in a lovely vintage car, various prizegivings, dinners, AGMs, Carol Services, other church services and my Civic Day at the Hat Festival, which the other Mayors just loved. The Mayor's quiz night made some £800 for my charities, which was a wonderful result. I have been supported by and wish to thank all of our hard working staff.

Councillor Sandra Brown
Town Mayor 2015-16

The Leader of the Council

The new Town Council took office in May 2015 and this Annual report outlines some of the Council's achievements over the past year. In particular, we have adopted a new Town Plan and looked at our budgets for the next 4 years.

The Town Council is starting to deliver projects in the new Town Plan, alongside delivering core services. This is at a time when local government structures and funding are changing, which we anticipate will put more pressure on services that we value in Bridport and West Bay. The new Town Plan objectives cover this point by stating that the Town Council will "efficiently deliver its own services and projects and seek to safeguard services, currently provided by other councils, that may be at risk and that are important to the town, seeking sustainable devolution of functions supported by funding either to the Town Council or appropriate community organisations."

These are difficult times for local government and we will need to continue to work hard to ensure that all the services and assets that we all value are protected. The continued support of all of our partners, local organisations and the community will be more important than ever.

I am grateful for all the support of the Council, as well as the continued hard work of all of our staff.

Councillor Sarah Williams
Leader of the Town Council 2015-16

The New Council Year 2016/17



In May 2016, the Town Council made the following appointments for the year 2016/17:

Town Mayor:
Councillor Ros Kayes

Deputy Town Mayor:
Councillor Anne Rickard

Leader of the Council:
Councillor Sarah Williams

(Picture: Town Mayor 2016/17 Councillor Ros Kayes and mace bearers Cyril Whitlock and Paul Violet)

Bridport Town Council

The Town Council, as a democratically elected body, works in partnership with other agencies and community bodies to represent and promote the town, ensure the delivery of high quality services in response to local needs and improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of its area.

The Town Council offices are at
Mountfield, Rax Lane, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3JP.
Tel. no. 01308 456722
Email address: enquiries@bridport-tc.gov.uk
Website: www.bridport-tc.gov.uk

The Council's offices are open Monday to Friday,
8.30 am–5.00 pm (Friday 4.30 pm).

Staff

Town Clerk: Bob Gillis
Town Surveyor: Daryl Chambers
Finance & Office Manager: Paul Fuszard
Project Manager & Community Initiatives Officer : Katy Graham
Administrative Officer: Linda Bullock
Office Staff: Steven Yarde, Claire Peters-Way
Caretaker/Cleaner: Clare Violet
Senior Groundsman: Robert Goodland
Groundsman: Sean Coombs
Groundsman: Richard Pollard
Groundsman: Bobby Harris
Market Superintendent: Ken Hussey
Cemetery Superintendent: Paul Violet
Lengthsman: Ed Wootton

Bridport Town Councillors

Elected May 2015 for 4 years



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Bridport South

How the Council Works

The Council comprises 18 councillors - 9 to represent the South ward and 9 to represent the North ward.

All Councillors meet as the full Council to take the major decisions and oversee all activities of the Town Council. The Council appoints three main committees - Plans, Finance & General Purposes and Environment & Social Wellbeing. These are supported by a number of sub committees and working groups. Councillors are also appointed to serve on local outside organisations.

The Town Council meets six times a year at 7.00 pm on a Tuesday. The Plans Committee meets monthly on Mondays. The Finance and General Purposes and Environment and Social Wellbeing committees meet on Wednesdays, four or five times a year. The Council's Best Value and Scrutiny Sub Committee meets quarterly. Agendas are normally issued seven clear days before the meetings and are posted on public notice boards throughout the town and on the Council's website.

The press and public are welcome to attend all committee, sub committee and full Council meetings and the public may put questions or make statements on any matter on the agenda, in a 30 minute public forum at the beginning of all of these meetings. The minutes should be available within three working days following the meeting. They are available at the library, at the Council offices at Mountfield and on the Town Council website.

The Calendar of Meetings for the Year is on the Town Council's web site (www.bridport-tc.gov.uk) and on notice boards. Please contact Bob Gillis, Town Clerk for any information regarding Council meetings.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2016**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

	£		£
CURRENT ASSETS		INCOME	
Payments in advance	7,258	Precept	493,589
Debtors	42,758	Council Tax Support Grant	39,006
Money Market Deposits	203,957	Interest	3,267
Cash at Bank	705,362	Allotments	4,311
Cash in Hand	71	Cemetery	25,584
		Frontages	390
TOTAL ASSETS	959,406	Market	83,724
		Amenity Areas and Playing Fields	29,722
CURRENT LIABILITIES		Mountfield	52,817
		Salt House	8,238
Creditors	98,703	Town Hall	29,472
		Parish Clustering	7,200
NET ASSETS	860,703	Community Initiatives	1,082
		Park and Ride	3,800
REPRESENTED BY:		CCTV	16,837
		Town Plan Projects	27,500
General reserve 1 April 2015	512,662	Salary Contributions	25,353
Transfer to larger project reserves	(200,000)		
Net surplus for the year	50,905		851,892
		EXPENDITURE	
General reserve 31 March 2016	363,567	Administration	234,646
Earmarked reserve 1 April 2015	82,925	Office Expenses	11,229
Contribution to reserves	50,650	Mountfield	28,124
Earmarked funds expended	(41,765)	Salt House	16,340
		Town Hall	36,081
Earmarked reserve 31 March 2016	91,810	Cemetery	43,454
Larger project reserve 1 April 2015	0	Civic	7,181
Transfer from general reserves	200,000	Members' Allowances	12,951
Payments during the year	(13,995)	Market	38,549
		Amenity Areas and Playing Fields	157,496
Larger project reserve 31 March 2016	186,005	Parish Clustering	24,069
Capital Reserve 1 April 2015	0	Grants and Donations	24,620
Capital Receipt	219,321	Community Planning	43,965
		Park and Ride	6,901
Capital Reserve 31 March 2016	219,321	CCTV	21,766
		Town Plan Projects	65,087
TOTAL RESERVES	860,703	Other Services	28,528
			800,987
		NET SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	50,905

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of Bridport Town Council as at 31 March 2016 and reflects its income and expenditure during the year.